

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

MAY 2002



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Chilly weather slows spring hiring

As the calendar marked the beginning of spring unemployment rates in most of the metropolitan areas in the state declined. In the Eau Claire-Chippewa metro area, however, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose in April to 5.7 percent from 5.4 percent in March even though some laid off workers did find jobs.

The state seasonally adjusted rate declined in April to 5.4 percent from 5.7 percent in March while the national unemployment rate rose to 6.0 percent from 5.7 percent. Six of the state's eleven metropolitan areas had lower unemployment rates in April and two had rates that were unchanged. Even with the increase to 5.7 percent, the unemployment rate in Eau Claire was only fifth highest among the state metropolitan areas. Out of total labor force of 85,700 in April, 80,800 residents were employed and 4,900 were unemployed.

The higher unemployment rate in the Eau Claire metro area reflects a weakness in spring hiring, espe-

Notice: The US Census Bureau released demographic profile data for Wisconsin counties and municipalities on May 14, 2002. Included in this release was data on households and families, housing costs, income, poverty, labor force participation, ancestry, disability, and accommodations.

To retrieve the data, go to:

www.doa.state.wi.us/dhir/boir/demographic/wisconsin/index.html

Also released in May was county **Personal Per Capita Income** that appears in a table at the bottom of page 2.

cially in manufacturing and retail trade. That doesn't mean that employers weren't hiring workers in April. It means that employers typically hire even more workers in April than they did this year. Hiring by retail trade employers is especially sluggish this

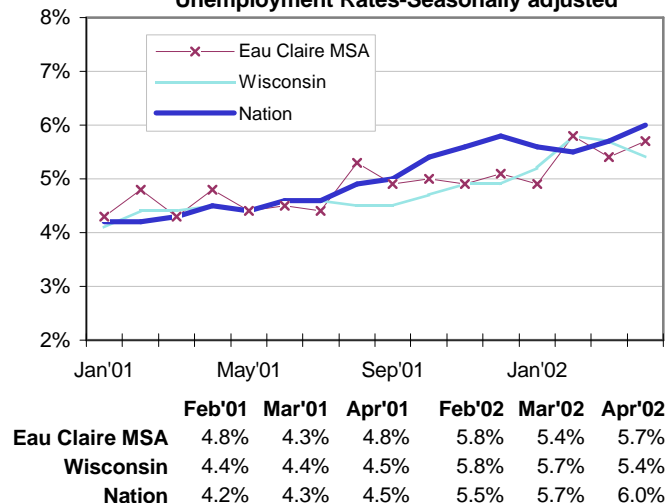
spring due to the weather and a lack of shopper enthusiasm for spring merchandise. Nevertheless, the total number of jobs in the metro area increased by 1,400 from March to April and all industries, except manufacturing, added workers.

Not seasonally adjusted the labor force estimates for the metro area included those workers who did return to jobs and the unemployment rate for both Chippewa and Eau Claire counties declined. Unemployment rates dropped in the seven rural counties of the West Central region in April along with rate reductions in 70 of the state's 72 counties.

In Barron County the unemployment rate dropped from 8.1 to 7.0 percent while in Clark it dropped from 11.4 to 8.7 percent. The unemployment rate declined from 6.5 to 5.5 percent in Dunn County and from 9.6 to 6.8 in Pepin County. In Pierce County the unemployment rate dropped from 6.3 to 5.1 percent, in Polk from 9.7 to 8.2 percent, and in St. Croix from 9.1 to 7.9 percent. Clark County had the highest rate in the region and the 11th highest in the state while Pierce had the lowest among the rural West Central counties and was 59th in the state.

The number of jobs in the non-metro counties combined rose by 1,800 from March to April. The greatest increase occurred in services and retail trade. This increase in jobs reflects near-normal hiring patterns in the rural counties. While the increase in construction jobs was below the additions in the spring of 2000 it did match the activity of one year ago. This month's activity shows that employers in this area are adding jobs but not at the hectic pace of two years ago.

Unemployment Rates-Seasonally adjusted



Labor Force Estimates, not seasonally adjusted

April Estimates	Wisconsin	EC MSA	Barron	Clark	Dunn	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St.Croix
Civilian Labor Force*	3,047,100	86,200	24,500	16,300	23,000	3,100	21,500	24,200	36,100
Employed	2,873,600	80,700	22,800	14,900	21,800	2,900	20,400	22,200	33,200
Unemployed	173,500	5,400	1,700	1,400	1,300	200	1,100	2,000	2,800
Unemployment rate(%)	5.7%	6.3%	6.8%	8.7%	5.5%	6.8%	5.1%	8.2%	7.9%

Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

April Estimates	Wisconsin	EC MSA	Barron	Clark	Dunn	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St.Croix
Total jobs, all industries**	2,811,600	77,000	21,500	10,000	15,900	2,100	11,200	15,200	27,300
Construction & Mining	119,670	3,430	710	520	580	160	420	690	1,480
Manufacturing	563,460	11,410	6,500	3,080	2,270	160	1,360	4,660	6,610
Transportation & Public Uti	131,270	3,360	700	430	520	100	500	470	1,060
Wholesale Trade	136,830	3,210	580	540	630	240	200	380	680
Retail Trade	497,390	17,550	4,170	1,280	4,100	460	2,390	2,750	6,300
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	151,840	2,870	400	220	430	70	320	480	990
Services	781,930	22,610	3,790	1,750	2,810	390	2,120	3,140	6,450
Government	429,250	12,580	4,650	2,150	4,540	560	3,880	2,640	3,770
Change from previous month									
Total jobs, all industries**	35,900	1,400	200	200	200	100	200	200	700
Construction & Mining	10,800	500	100	100	100	0	100	100	100
Manufacturing	1,320	-30	0	-10	10	0	-10	-10	0
Transportation & Public Uti	1,180	120	20	30	0	10	20	10	20
Wholesale Trade	970	0	10	20	30	10	10	10	30
Retail Trade	7,260	210	0	50	70	30	30	110	200
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	490	30	0	0	-10	0	0	10	20
Services	11,440	380	90	30	110	0	60	-20	280
Government	2,510	130	40	-10	-80	30	40	-20	0
Change from one year ago									
Total jobs, all industries**	-4,500	1,100	300	100	0	0	300	400	1,000
Construction & Mining	100	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Manufacturing	-25,860	-660	40	10	0	0	40	60	-130
Transportation & Public Uti	-3,640	-40	30	10	10	0	-10	0	-20
Wholesale Trade	160	40	10	-10	-10	-20	-20	0	30
Retail Trade	3,810	-330	0	-10	10	10	60	80	500
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	3,340	70	-30	-10	30	0	0	10	90
Services	13,420	690	90	40	40	0	30	140	230
Government	4,190	870	180	20	-60	0	170	110	170

** Includes employment with employers located in area. Current month estimates are preliminary. Calculations based on unrounded number

The per capita personal income (PCPI) for the West Central region rose 4.9 percent from 1999 to 2000 according to estimates released in May by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The increase is above the state rise of 4.6 percent and closes the gap with the state. The West Central PCPI is now 89 percent of the state, the closest it has been this decade.

The PCPI in St. Croix County is always higher than in the state and in 2000 the gap increased to 111 percent. One reason that income is high in St. Croix County is from wages earned in Minnesota. PCPI in Pierce and Eau Claire counties was 94 and 92 percent of the state, respectively. Earnings are the largest share of total income and in both counties the increase in net earnings exceeded the state.

Per Capita Personal Income in West Central Wisconsin

	Wisc	WC Wisc	Barron	Chippewa	Clark	Dunn	Eau Claire	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St.Croix
1995	\$22,573	\$19,171	\$17,558	\$18,663	\$15,806	\$17,237	\$20,111	\$16,712	\$19,704	\$17,920	\$23,604
1996	\$23,554	\$20,337	\$18,698	\$19,937	\$16,755	\$18,197	\$21,083	\$18,100	\$21,118	\$19,053	\$25,040
1997	\$24,481	\$21,243	\$19,209	\$21,204	\$17,120	\$18,912	\$21,993	\$18,348	\$22,149	\$19,600	\$26,430
1998	\$26,004	\$22,754	\$21,058	\$23,061	\$19,090	\$19,627	\$23,657	\$19,623	\$23,515	\$20,635	\$27,743
1999	\$26,869	\$23,714	\$21,535	\$23,814	\$19,506	\$20,637	\$24,621	\$19,938	\$24,661	\$21,469	\$29,466
2000	\$28,100	\$24,880	\$22,320	\$24,914	\$19,809	\$21,504	\$25,803	\$20,853	\$26,317	\$22,688	\$31,158
1-yr. change	4.6%	4.9%	3.6%	4.6%	1.6%	4.2%	4.8%	4.6%	6.7%	5.7%	5.7%
5-yr. change	24.5%	29.8%	27.1%	33.5%	25.3%	24.8%	28.3%	24.8%	33.6%	26.6%	32.0%

Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, May 2002

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

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